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Seventy-first year

Letter dated 24 April 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter addressed to the Secretary-General from the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Mr. Salaheddine Mezouar, reiterating the categorical opposition of the Kingdom of Morocco to any role or involvement whatsoever of the African Union in the question of the Moroccan Sahara, as well as its strongest rejection of the repeated attempts by the African Union to interfere in the consideration of that matter by the Security Council (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex issued as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 30, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Omar **Hilale**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 24 April 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

With regard to the letter addressed to you on 16 April 2016 by the President of the African Union Commission on the question of the Moroccan Sahara, the Kingdom of Morocco would like to reiterate its categorical opposition to any role or involvement of the African Union in this issue.

The Kingdom of Morocco reiterates its strongest rejection of the repeated attempts by the African Union to interfere in the consideration of that question by the Security Council, in particular, the unjustified and unwarranted request for the African Union "Special Envoy", Mr. Joaquim Chissano, to interact with the Council.

The non-negotiable position of Morocco against any involvement of the African Union in the issue of the Moroccan Sahara has already been brought to your attention in the letter addressed to you by His Majesty King Mohammed VI in June 2013, as well as in the letters by the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Ms. M'barka Bouaida, on 26 December 2013, by the Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations on 9 June and 1 July 2014, and in my letter dated 6 April 2015.

Allow me to recall the legitimate reasons behind the position of the Kingdom of Morocco:

- The consideration of the question of the Moroccan Sahara falls within the exclusive remit of the United Nations, following the failure of the Organization of African Unity to deal with the dispute.
- The negotiation process to bring about a mutually acceptable political solution to the issue of the Moroccan Sahara is held under the exclusive auspices of the United Nations, in accordance with successive Security Council resolutions. The Security Council has, rightly, never given any role or mandate whatsoever to the African Union, or that organization's Peace and Security Council, in the political negotiations led by the United Nations.
- Through its attempts to revive obsolete proposals and plans considered unachievable by the United Nations and rejected by the Security Council, the African Union clearly seeks to undermine the ongoing United Nations efforts to resolve this regional dispute.
- The credibility of the African Union on the issue of the Moroccan Sahara is compromised given its position which completely contradicts Security Council resolutions calling for a negotiated and mutually acceptable political solution, based on a realistic approach and a spirit of compromise.
- The positions adopted by the African Union on the question of the Moroccan Sahara reflect those of Algeria and the Frente Polisario, notwithstanding the opposition and reservations of several African member States. This blatant bias, at the instigation of Algeria, is kept alive by the African Union secretariat, in particular its Peace and Security Department, which has, for several years now, been headed by a succession of Algerian diplomats.

- The latest decisions of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, which are hostile to Morocco, inherently biased and out of step with the realities of the case, clearly demonstrate that the Union lacks all neutrality on the question of the Moroccan Sahara and that it is incapable of playing any role or contributing in any way to the issue.

- The African Union prejudged, in a biased manner, the outcome of the political negotiations under the auspices of the United Nations, by admitting, within its membership, an entity that has no attribute of sovereignty.

For all these reasons, I would like to underline that the attempts at sabotage by the African Union and its interference in this matter pose a serious threat to the entire political process conducted under the auspices of the United Nations, which has the support of all the parties and the international community, including the African countries.

Consequently, Morocco considers that any attempts to involve or interact with the African Union in this matter would be an unacceptable and detrimental intrusion that would be fatal to the efforts of the United Nations concerning the Moroccan Sahara.

The Kingdom of Morocco remains actively committed to the ongoing negotiations towards a lasting and mutually acceptable political solution to this regional dispute, under the exclusive auspices of the United Nations and in accordance with successive Security Council resolutions.

(*Signed*) Salaheddine **Mezouar**